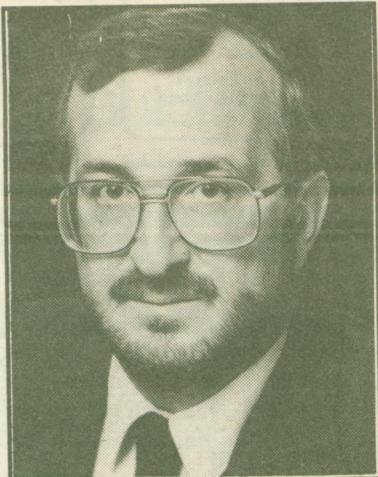


Queen's Park Report

Some of you may remember a much earlier report about the provincial-municipal undertaking known as disentanglement. A few days ago, Municipal Affairs Minister Dave Cooke and Community & Social Services Minister Marion Boyd announced that our government and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) had reached a draft agreement on a trade-off of responsibilities between the two levels of government. Disentanglement is scheduled to take effect on January 1st of next year.



Noel Duignan MPP

Haltón North

municipalities of provincial policy and program changes made in the previous year.

Does this mean that municipalities will no longer deliver welfare services?

No. People who receive welfare will continue to receive the same level of service, from the same people, as they do now.

Why is the government interested in this agreement?

For years, social activists and anti-poverty groups have urged provincial governments to pay the full cost of welfare allowances and this government is actually doing it. Municipalities can concentrate on budgeting for local priorities without having to worry about welfare expenditures over which they have no control.

An income distribution program like welfare shouldn't be paid for through property taxes which don't consider people's varying abilities to pay. We also believe the agreement will lead to better use of taxpayers' dollars through more accountable, efficient and accessi-

ble service.

If you're a rail commuter, you might be interested in knowing that GO Transit is carrying out an environmental assessment study for the proposed expansion of the Georgetown line. The plan calls for service improvements to be undertaken in stages.

GO Transit has also proposed a new site for overnight train storage in Georgetown. An information open house will be held on Tuesday, February 16 from 5 to 9 p.m. at Sacre Coeur Hall located at 39 Guelph Street. Representatives for GO Transit and its consulting engineers will be there to answer your questions about the plans to supplement existing rail service to and from Georgetown.

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The process seeks to untangle and realign the roles and responsibilities between municipalities and the province. Disentanglement will help people understand who provides what services and who can be held accountable for them. It also addresses which level of government should set policies for a particular program or service, which is best suited to deliver it, and which should fund it and how.

What is the agreement?

1. The province will pick up the full cost of general welfare allowances. Municipalities now pay about 20 per cent of these costs.

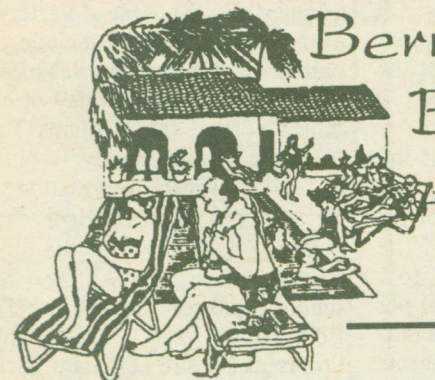
2. In return, municipalities will:

- pay for property assessment services the province provides for free
- pay for the maintenance of certain provincial highways serving primarily local traffic
- receive a reduction in their annual unconditional grants

3. Municipalities will receive greater control over the setting of municipal police budgets — a long-standing request.

4. An annual joint planning meeting of key Cabinet members and AMO representatives will be held to discuss the cumulative impact on

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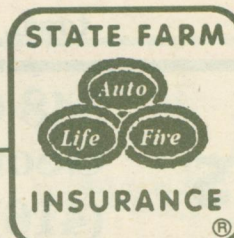
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